

ABOLITION



ABOLITION #2

NOVEMBER 2001

PO BOX 700 BRUNSWICK LWR. VIC. 3056.

HEY YOU!

Are you doin time? Is someone you care about inside? Do you have an opinion about the way the prison system is run? Do you have an opinion about the existence of the prison system itself?

Do you feel there are very few avenues available for people to vent their frustrations within the system? Are you sick and tired of hearing about the refugee's "coming to steal your home". Do you have a mind of your own?

If you do, then why not contribute to ABOLITION. We are not an organisation, just people concerned about how our community is being treated. We believe in community responsibility, in community to solutions, not profiteering and violence. We want to have control over what happens in our lives. We want an end to the alienation and desperation that we are faced with in our lives. Prison is not a solution to the problems we are facing, prison doesn't end homelessness, prison doesn't mean an end to hunger, prison won't get rid of banks and unemployment. Prisons is their solution to they're problems. We need to communicate and learn from each other.

Oh yeah, if you want to send us any money too that's ok with us.

For copies, please send a stamp as postage does eat into the meagre resources we have.

Thanks heaps to Donna & Darebin Legal Centre for helping me workout computers, and also thanks to Camilla for letting use her work to print and produce this issue.

Please be aware that ABOLITION may not neccescarily agree with what any contributors have said, each authors work is their own, and is hence their opinion. So don't try to sue us as we haven't got any money and I'll do a runner. All right are, of course retained by the respective suthors over their work, and reproduction is permitted with consent from that author.

To contact anyone whose work appears within, please use the abolition address as seen above.

Cheers.

ABOLITION ISSUE #2 NOVEMBER 2001

G'Day Y'all, greetings to you. Thanks for getting this second issue of ABOLITION, which I hope you, enjoy. One again thankyou to all the people who have written to me and contributed to the zine, without your efforts this would not happen.

No thanks to prison officials who make it so difficult to reach certain prisoners. I lost about thirty copies to the NSW 'correctional service'. So I hope they liked 'em.

Well as we stand on the brink of all out war "against terrorism" they tell me? We are told that the world will never be the same after the World trade centre bombings, and in alot of ways they're right. But what is going to change for prisoners??? I can't see these events leading to any kind of positive changes within the system, can you? In a letter to a friend of mine, he has said that Middle Eastern inmates have been the targets of abuse from both the screws and right wing inmate alike. I think these kind of extreme events make it easier to see whose side people are really on.

This war on terrorism they speak seems to mean a stricter more draconian police system. With tougher sentencing laws and more violent jails, with an ever more watchful eye on any group that doesn't agree with the states-quo.

So what can we do to resist these changes? I spose we'll just have to keep on stickin it to 'em until where all in jail or something gives. Maybe I'll be collating the next ABOLITION in Barwon?? Who knows?

In any case stay tuned for another CNN war.

Once again, please do not hesitate to write to ABOLITION, I do my up most to return every letter I get, so I can guarantee a reply. There have been a few problems like I mentioned above, but we have to keep on trying. Commun is our ultimate tool against their power, infact, it is all to often our only tool against their power. With your input this can be a publication that could really open up alot of opportunities for people on the inside, and hence the rest of us out here. I'd like to thank Matt Convey for his efforts in regard to ABOLITION; you're a champ mate. You've taught me alot about the system and how it works and also alot about people in general. Say strong brother.

Take care out there to everyone, inside and out. Every order is doomed to disorder, our day is coming! (What the hell does that mean?)

Apologies for the typo's in issue one, I never was much of a spella (sic, hehe)

Forever in Solidarity and Friendship - Bart.

The poem you see below was written by a very clever ten year old, Amy Parsons. Her mum sent this to me and when I got it, it really affected me. I thought that it would be a good way to start this issue.

Amy's mum is doing time in Victoria at the moment, without her kids. This arrangement is doubly punitive, has Amy done anything wrong? Why shouldn't she be able to be with her mum?

"SOMEONE"
by Amy.

Someone that is always in your mind
at the good and bad times.
Someone who cheers you up when you are feeling sad.
Someone who is proud of you no matter what you do,
Some one to look up to,
'Cause their a part of you.
Someone that tries their best,
Doesn't turn their back on you.
Someone I love more than words can say.
Someone more precious than the hours of the day;
It is my mummy and daddy who I love more each and every day.

Is there any better arguement against the prison system....

VITRIOLIC DISPATCHES - by Matt Convey.

Welcome to what will hopefully become the first of many columns to grace the pages of ABOLITION! I'd like to take this opportunity to thank Bart for giving me this chance to vent my spleen on a wide range of subjects on a regular; thanks mate! Also, I guess I should make it clear that anything written in this or future column(s) is not necessarily endorsed by ABOLITION. By the way, I very much welcome any feedback on my column, I can be reached by mail via the ABOLITION address. Anyway, in this column I'd like to talk a bit about this so-called "War on Terrorism"

THE WAR ON TERRORISM - WHO'S NEXT?

As I write these words, casualties in Afghanistan are mounting - civilian ones at that, despite US assurances that '....every reasonable attempt is being made to keep collateral damage to a minimum'. Just like during the Gulf war or the air strikes on Serbia I guess? Would you like some depleted uranium with your horror and carnage sir? But instead of focusing on either the horrendous events of September 11th or equally repugnant retaliatory strikes I would instead like to draw attention to what is likely to occur once events in Afghanistan arrive at some type of conclusion. As we all know, the US and its allies have declared war on '...terror in all its forms...' I find this worrying for what I believe are obvious reasons.

Whose to say that once the US and its war eager cohorts (which would seem to include this country thanks to John 'HowardHeKnow'?) have eradicated the current crop of religious fanatics/terrorists that they won't turn their collective attentions to less conventional "enemies of democracy" - namely the global anti-capitalist movement? After all, at the end of the day isn't it the US and their lap dogs that who have the final say on what groups or individuals are to be condemned and persued as 'terrorists'?

We have already seen how easily the US have been able to convince the (both now and in the past) a large sector of the international community that particular governments, groups and individuals are "of a terrorist nature", so it would stand to reason that it has gotten to the point that it would be very easy for them to label anarchists, eco-activists, prison abolition groups, etc. as terrorists, and receive international support. This "War on Terror" has meant a huge increase in the surveillance and monitoring of public spaces, private spaces, groups, organisations and individuals - all of course, in the name of "counter-terrorism" and "security". Isn't there enough of this type of thing in place already? How, for example, could a city like London, England be made any more secure when the whole city is under surveillance by CCTV? No amount of security can prevent events such as those that occurred in the US on September 11th, this should be obvious to just about anybody.

It is appearing as though the global capitalist cartel are trying to ensure that the world remains on a war footing permanently. It's good for their economy and is a convenient excuse to put in place harsh, draconian laws and to carry out acts of extreme repression against dissent of any kind. Call me paranoid or misinformed if you will, but I believe that the eradication of dissent is the real long term aim of this fucking 'war on terrorism'. I feel that Western governments have been working towards this goal for some time now and September 11 is all a justification they needed to speed up the process. But I could be wrong, 'cos here I am just a social prisoner trying to make sense of the news flashes etc. beamed into my cell, mainstream newspapers and what scant information I receive of a dissenting nature-I hope I am. But if I am right, I would suggest that now is not the time for complacency - now is the time to do something before the shit really hits the fuckin fan. But hey, that's just what I think and I couldn't give a fuck if no-one agrees with me now - I'll just remind you I was right when we're all being herded off for interment/liquidation. See you next time, if there is one....

Monday 13th August 2001

Kylie Morgan
Emu Plains C.C.
LMB 6
Penrith NSW 2750

RE: STOP THE WOMEN'S JAIL CAMPAIGN

Dear

As an inmate at the Emu Plains Correctional Centre for women, I write this letter in support and favor of the "Stop the Women's Jail" campaign.

The answer to the overcrowding of the Mulawa and Emu Plains prisons is, not to just build another jail, that provides more holding space, but to promote, address and implement alternatives to sentencing women, to full time custody, and to also provide adequate services and programs, to the women that are already detained.

The majority of women currently in prison, right now are repeat offenders, who are continually imprisoned because they commit crimes to pay for their drug addiction. Rather than to just keep incarcerating these women, maybe a solution is to provide more rehabilitation services and centers. Extensions of the current Drug Court facility at Parramatta Court might be an option another possibility is, if these women actually had efficient and realistic Drug and Alcohol services and programs, made available to them during their term of imprisonment, then the recidivism rate might not be so high.

We need to address why there is such an increase in women being incarcerated. I was of the understanding, that the NSW Magistrates and Judges have been directed to consider alternatives to full time custodial sentences. If this is so then why is it not being adhered to? It is also not obvious that the current so called programs and services, within the women's jails, are totally inadequate?

I strongly advise against the expansion of the NSW women prison system and suggest that the funds, which have been allocated to this unsuitable project be redirected into increasing adequate rehabilitation and welfare services. Also needed, are more transitional centers to enable imprisoned women access to pre and post release programs. I feel this would address and possibly achieve the successful reintegration of these women into the community.

To successfully address and achieve these solution it is essential for the women currently imprisoned to assist and or give their views and opinions in the designing of these solutions. Especially so as they are the ones most effected and are aware of the current issues and problems that exist within the system.

I fully support this campaign to "Stop the Women's Jail" I take this opportunity to give much thanks and gratitude to all the people that have worked so diligently and selflessly on this campaign. With people like you out there caring and fighting for us inmates in here, I can be assured that we are not alone in our never ending plight for justice.

Yours Sincerely,
Kylie Morgan.

PAIGE'S MAGIC KISSES

BY DONNA

Paige is a very imaginative four-year-old, with big blue eyes and mousy colored hair; she has a very impish smile about her and laughs all the time.

Paige is a happy child and nothing seems to worry her, she is not bothered by daily events happening around her and she is too young to understand. Yet she is the most caring and loving child anyone would be proud to have.

One day whilst I was sitting at the table watching the children playing, I went into a sort of dream state. Not here, not there. Paige came running over and jumped up on my lap, startled by this manoeuvre we both nearly topple backwards over the chair.

"Mummy" she said " I have magic kisses and they make people who are sad very happy, would you like me to give you my magic kisses because you look so sad".

I looked at her and my heart melted when I saw those big blue eyes starring at me, and that impish grin. I said "Yes darling I think that right now I need a Paige'ee Pops cuddle and your magic kisses".

Paige put her tiny little arms around my neck and gave me her biggest cuddle yet. Then she released her grip and started to kiss my forehead, then went to my chin, my nose, my cheeks, my eyes, my neck and lastly my lips.

When she finished she gave me another big hug and jumped off my lap, just as quickly as she got on.

Off she went to play with the other children and I sat and watched her. She ran around the room chasing her big sister, then she started climbing in and out of the large plastic house, sliding down the little red slide she went, walking back up the slide again only to fall back down. This went on for what seemed to be an eternity. In and out of the door or window she did not care, she looked over and smiled her sweetly smile. I smiled back at her as only a mother could do.

With that she came running over again and with a huge jump, landed on my lap. She flung her arms around my neck and said "Mummy I do love you very much, with my magic kisses you should be happy now, so don't look so sad". I tried to hold back the tears as she said it and before she could get away from me, I grabbed hold of her and started to tickle her belly. She squealed with laughter, I sat her upright and gave her my magic kisses and said to her "these kisses that I give to you now will keep you safe from harm until I see you again".

I asked her about the magic kisses that she gave to me, and why she thought they were magic and would make me happy. My little darling replied "well mummy I miss you so much and do not see you that often, I have to leave you with something to keep you smiling and my magic kisses will do that because they are magic".

"Okay" I replied and we had another big cuddle.

Amy, Paige's big sister came over and Paige sat on Amy's lap and gave her magic kisses to her sister. When Paige had finished she said to Amy "these are because you are my sister and I love you very much too, they are my magic kisses and will keep you happy just like mummy until we can come next time to visit mummy". I thought to myself what a little treasure she is. Paige ran off to play again.

Amy and I sat there and watched her skip away, not a care in the world. Then Amy turned to me and asked, "what are these magic kisses, where did they come from". I looked at Amy and held her close, then told her "Paige has found her own way of dealing with this situation that we are in and she is trying to keep us both happy. She can feel we are both sad, so it is her way of showing us that she cares and loves us very much".

After I told Amy, she looked at me and I grabbed hold of her to give the magic kisses to her. I kissed her all over just as Paige had done to me and when I finished I told her, "these are my magic kisses to you and they will keep you safe from harm until we see each other again". Amy

smiled at me and I said "you will always have them everyday we are apart, and when you are sad just remember the magic kisses, they will never go away". Amy looked at me and said "mummy you will be okay won't you, God will look after you whilst you are in here, he won't let anyone hurt you will he. Like they did to daddy. We will soon be together again won't we"? I looked at her with tears in my eyes, I gave her the biggest hug I could give at which time Paige came running over so we all had a group hug.

Soon it was time to leave so with one more kiss and cuddle they were gone, leaving me alone in the visit center of the prison I am in. Once again I was all-alone.

THE GREATEST HITS OF THE 60'S, 70'S, 80'S, 90'S & NOW

By Tony Van Gastoye

Challange all the unthinkers
Those of inbred thoughts
To realise their normality
Is everyman's banality.

Jimmy Barnes on the radio
Big Brother on the telly
Pauline in the voting booth
Come on Aussie (apologise and wipe it off)

Apoligise too, to those who believe
All that's said of the land down under.
Where water cannon and tear gas thunder.

It's time to close our concentration camps

PRISON

Lyn Heaney

I looked around me
All I see is walls
White hats
Authority
Change
What's that?
Again walls
Screws
CRIMS!
They come
They go
MORE games
Change
If I could
Change
The games.

12/10/01

HOURS

By Tony Van Gastoye

To while away the hours
To rearrange the flowers
Is a luxury not afforded me.
My day is spent in solitude
With a hundred and sixty other souls
Staring through the razor wire
At unattainable goals.
To while away the flowers
And rearrange the hours
a dream of life yet to be.
I night is spent in abject fear
Of the other man that sleeps so near
Of snores and farts and nightmare conversation,
I hope to god he doesn't waken
for when he does - the indignity of sodomistic rape.
To rearrange the while away
and flower the hours
my thoughts are no longer mine you see
But my dreams are mine
for all they're worth;
The nightmare screams of bashings and smashings and rape
And blood and threats of dying
The erotic landscape of private times and indecent crimes
and dreaming of my one hundred true lovers.
The frantic cinemascope in vivid and livid true life colours
of past glories and future stories:
All attack after lockdown,
To flower the while away and rearrange the hours
Someone help me,

UNTITLED #1

by B.Lim

why are so many people
such narrow-minded beings?
at least I can say,
that I have done alot more in life
than most have ever seen.

why are we always judged?
by things done in our past
and not by our potentials,
who we could become
if only someone would just give
one chance or a helping hand.

but it seems most people
are so easily filled with scorn,
For those of us that make mistakes
and away from society are torn,
then shut away, exiled and forlorn.

for they are content not to question
or step outside the laws,
as they have been indoctrinated from day of birth.
to accept the governments commands
no matter how unfair,
quick to judge and persecute
those few who dare.

things are black and white
never in-between
but when put into the same situation
are the first to rant and rave.

so why should we
who have done wrong
have to change on demand
from people that are so blind.
I may be a thief and criminal
at least I have an open mind.

FREE AS A BIRD

By Donna Parsons

Here I am, thirty-eight years old, never been in trouble in my life before. Suddenly taken away from everything I know and love and sent to a place of hell. Why? I ask myself this question everyday.

One day I am at home with my family, the next my whole life is torn apart as the police arrest me for the murder of my husband. My two small children are left with a friend, everything they have ever known taken away from them, there lives suddenly changed. They do not understand.

Now as I sit looking out of the window, staring into open spaces there is nothing to see no answers to the questions, just this empty hole inside of me. Yes there are plenty of blue uniforms all around, these are the officers.

The day is beautiful, very hot, most of the other prisoners are outside taking in the sun, as for me I sit at my desk and look out of that same window day in day out.

It has been three months now and I have seen my children five times only. They are always distressed when they come in, I cuddle and kiss them and tell them it will be all right, but I don't know myself. I can only pray to God to help me. Each day I pray to keep them safe from harm.

This empty hole inside of me is getting bigger and bigger as each day goes by. I do not know what to expect, everyone around me has there own problems, and no one gives a dam. I have to talk to someone, I have to let it out, and I cannot hold it in any longer, I-beg for help from the officers, but they don't hear me. I beg for help from the welfare officer but they don't hear me. I give up no one cares, all I want to do it to be free again, to be outside these prison walls back home with my children, I want to be free as the birds that fly around the prison.

On the death of a friend.

*I am trying to put a face to the feeling's I am experiencing,
Trying to make eye contact with this image of you,
The one I carry within.*

*A human face, even in memory is profound and it
Defies description.
I cannot describe it to myself, let alone anyone else.
It comes and goes of it's own accord, taunting my memory.*

*It appears as if something dreamed in fictional rather than historic proportions,
Yet with every emotion written upon its surface
I know your face.*

*I have seen it smile countless ways,
I have seen it talk and brood,
And I have seen it burned with sorrow and regret.*

*Sometime 's a strange language came from your lips
But we needed no interpreter between us.*

*I never hesitated to disagree with you
And you never asked me to explain.*

*I am not angry that you chose a different path,
But I am filled with regret for the things that might have been
And because the spell has been broken.*

*I can say your name but there is no one here
I can talk to myself as you,
And you as myself,
But words are poor substitutes for deeds.*

*No words can revive a life
Nor will they dissolve abandonment.*

*Words and memories are a kind of comfort
In the absence of flesh and blood.
We benefit from them just as they serve
For the symbolic purposes of the poet.*

HELL OR NOT

by Donna Parsons

I had to go to court today, I arrived around nine a.m, after being stripped searched yet again, I was led to the holding cell. You should have seen her.

The Officer opened the door to the cell and there she stood in front of me, I looked at her in disbelief, black and blue she was, her face on the right side was a mess. All swollen, she had a large cut above the eye, beaten up probably, on drugs, been busted who knows. No one ever tells the truth in prison.18 years old I think.

Couldn't be much older than that no.

I greeted her with "what are you doing back in here, and what happened to you".

She looked down to the floor in disgrace and mumbled. "Car chase by the police, they won".

.....Dragged out of the car and beaten up most likely. Poor kid, I looked at her. She lifted her t-shirt and showed me more bruising around her ribs,broken they were three of them at least. Her left collarbone also broken, she was a mess. Yet no one in the Magistrates Court seemed to care or did anything to ease her pain.

After continually calling up for some medication to ease the pain an Officer came and took her away. Half hour went by and she was returned to the cell.more bruises around the face. She came into the cell and dropped onto the concrete bed and lay there. Never said a word. Time went by and I looked at her again. The left side of her face was becoming swollen, wasn't there before. Another belting by the officers perhaps.

This is outrageous, what is going on around me, why do they do these things, this is no way to treat human beings.

The following work comes from women at the Dame Phylis Centre in St. Albans. Due to some confusion in our communication, I haven't been able to work out how they wanted their works presented, basically if they wanted to be named or not. So no names appear on the following works.

Apologies to those people if they had wanted thier names to appear, but because I didn't know I thought it safer to leave them out all together.

UNTITLED

Showered by a wounded soul, the red drops fall to fill the pool arms and legs frantically splash as the level rises
above my head contorted face grasps For air....I am drowning.

Flags do rise and fall, a child screams their pain, I breath the air of war. Though a time of peace is near, but do
their cunning tongues don't hear I must leave before the plague join me brother sister please. To rise to meet
the sun.

I a, where the days move slow I am where the weeks fly by my internal compass circles round, my feet walk
without my mind

I needn't use my brain to talk, I needn't use my brain at all, rage inside me like a cancer grows, it fills my brain
and fills my soul

If I decorate my room with a mutilated body, I want the power of my wrath felt on flesh
I cannot speak, I have nothing to say, I cannot feel, I am numb, I cannot breath, I have no air I cannot grow.

.....

THE CLEARING.

Sept. 2001

The fury wells from deep within
Pushed to the fore at the slightest whim
Sensitive to the core
The rage that engulfs me
Don't want that no more
Set me free
Set me free.

Bound by thoughts
Bound by pain
Over and over
Again and again
Unleash the demons
The two don't mix
It makes me scream
Scream on the inside
It wants out
Started as a seed
The Harvest now ripe
Clear the debris
And bring back to life
Nuture the hollow
And fill with light.

I stand for all eyes that pass to see,
 I can feel their hate and disrespect for me,
 Laughed at,
 sworn at ripped off,
 threatened,
 raped,
 fucked around,
 stranded,
 beaten,
 the lowest of scum in the hierarchy of scum,
 thought of lower than a bin scabbing bin.
 Fear of the thirst of my hungering junk cells,
 Is the only reason I am placed in this hell
 some drive laps for
 hours and
 hours
 others take seconds before picking their
 FLOWER.
 "How bout a head job for thirty bucks?"
 Slam his door, tight little fuck.
 "How bout sex without a condom?"
 'YOU FILTHY FUCKING ANIMAL',
 m o v e a l o n e...
 "How about anal sex, how much for that?"
 -'Don't fucken do it, go somewhere else, rat.'
 "I only want Y
 O
 U if W
 E can KI-SS"
 'NOT in this *fucking* life' I hissssss.
 "Will you watch me eat my own shit and drink my own piss?"
 "Yeah, for the price I'll even watch you stick a huge dildo from up where you shit." ☺
 "Will you BURN my penis with a lit cigarett?"
 'Hell, yeah!!, I'll take pleasure as you break into a painful sweat.'
 {I'll empty you wallet}, while giving you a head job,
 If you fall a z z z z sleep, you'll be lucky to wake with two bob.
 Don't show me where you live,
 I'll burg you when your
 G
 O
 N
 e.
 If you dropped dead in front of me, I'd sing a happy ☺ song.
 But "I want you to enjoy yourself too", you say, you fucking dip shit!
 You've got shit for brains I can't *believe* you would be that stupid!
 Did you think for you I would be struck by cupid?!?!?
 Though I smile and 'act' sweet
 I hate your fucking guts Cause a mug is a mug is a fucken mug!

WHAT'S THE POINT

by Donna Parsons

What's the point I think to myself, no one listens to me, no one seems to care, no one gives a dam, so what is the point?

Today I am supposed to be at the Magistrates Court for a committal mention, yet here I am sitting at this desk looking out of that same window.

No jail order came for me to go to Court; instead the police attend Court yesterday and get an adjournment of the case until after Christmas. I am helpless, I feel so alone, no one to talk to, and my Solicitor does not seem interested in the case. I have requested that he comes in but yet he does not.

I sit and wait as each day passes me by, nothing is new anymore. Am I in a rut, it seems like it? Not wanting to be here, but not having any choice either.

I want to work back in the gardens but I am not allowed due to my back injury in October. So here I am thirty-eight years old sitting in this classroom looking out of the window.

The day is beautiful again, I think to myself I should be at home sunbathing or on the beach with the girls instead I am sat in shorts and tshirt sitting in the classroom of the education Centre in prison.

There is no teacher here; she has not come in yet. I just sit and think what can I do. This is my first time in this class; everyone around me has work to do but not me.

It is so silent in here you could hear a pin drop. No one talks, they all work, soon it will be time to go, but go where, there is not where to go.

It is the same dull routine everyday, get up, have a shower, go to medical, come to education go back to the unit. There is nothing to do at night after we are locked in the unit, so what is the point.

DETACHMENT

-T. Malby 99

An hour and a half sitting in Centrelink, and hour and a half just for a countercheck,
The bitch calls me up and hands me one more form, then tells me that the others weren't for me at all.
"Whatcha try'na tell me that you waste my time?" "Nah," she says, "the only time you waste was mine!"
The Bloke behind me thinks he gotta be the dude, he pushes me again, I think 'how fucking rude',
As I leave the queue he gives an evil grin, I wonder how much more before these bureau-rats give in,
Another half an hour, two more fucking forms, I've been there for so long I don't bloody care no more,
They call me up, hand me the cash I leave the queue, Then the booming voice "Don't nobody fucken move!
All of ya get down, ya faces to the floor!" "Fucking oath!" I mutter, "How much bloody more?"
That pushy little turd with the demonic shitty grin, grabs my bloody purse and takes the money from within,
Sawnoff shotgun in my face, not a bloody cent, my precious time wasted without my consent,
I wonder what will happen, how will I react, "Nah, fuckit" I think, "I think I'll just detach."

Three hours in the pub, before I found the man, I only want just an ounce right now, but he let out a
"Damn!
I've not got that much, but if ya want ta take a spin, We'll nick up to me dealers. lie's sure ta make ya grin!"
After driving up the road an hour and a bit, he says "Give us the money, an' I'll go get the shit!"
I hesitate a second, then ask if I can come, His stony cold stare told me, he thought I was DUMB.
I sat there waiting, and the hours began to stack, till it suddenly hit me, he weren't comin' back!
"Fucking oath!" I mutter, "How much bloody more? How fucked is it, when I can't even score?"
A cop pulls up beside me, then grunts me to move on, "Yeah, I'm fucking going, I been here way too long."
He glares at me and asks if I think I'm bein' smart, I want to yell "FUCK YOU!" but somehow I just can't,
I turn the bloody key but the ignition won't ignite, I wonder "Should I run?" I wonder if I might.
If I did I wonder how would this jack react? "Nah! Fuck it" I think, "I think I'll just detach."

I'm hunched up in a room in some hicktown Poe-lice shop, three broken ribs from you local friendly cop,
Told him I didn't do it, weren't even there, 'Whack' the backhand, "Tell someone who cares!"
"We'll go through this one more time, I don't want any lip, tell 'em what I told ya, I'm tiring of this shit!"
I explain it weren't me committed this crime, "We got 14 witnesses, ya sayin' they're all lyin'?"
He reads out the charges, thirty seven in all, He asks me what happened, I say "I can't recall.
I wanna call my lawyer, exercise my right." He says he'd like to help me, but the phones are down tonight.
"Just admit what ya done, and then we'll give ya bail, keep on with this denial and you're on your way to gaol."
I wish I could remember what I'd done that day, I try to recollect but me memory's walked away,
Last thing I relive was being hurt again, sudden blinding numbness, sharp stabbing pain,
An angry thump, then the crack as my head hit the floor, Suddenly I decided I wouldn't take no more...
I remember thinking "Just how will he react, if all'ova a sudden I just decided to detach."

written → 19.7.01

The Jails are the Crime

In the last three weeks alone we have seen the introduction of legislation in the Northern Territory and in NSW allowing yet more increases in police powers to further wage a war against drug users and which actively discriminate against Youth and Aboriginal people. The aim is to enable the politicians to be seen as tough on crime, with the effect of furthering the tilt of the criminal justice system in favour of the wealthy and the privileged. This is in line with the current political mentality which dictates the 'necessity' of a war on drugs and which pushes for an increase in the use of our legal and correctional system to punish and control so-called 'undesirables' in society.

NT police now have the power to listen in on phone calls, to search without a warrant (under the proposed Weapons Control Act), and there is a proposal to give them the power to move people on from an area declared to be a place of 'anti-social behavior' for up to 72 hours. Under this proposed bill (the Sentencing Amendment Bill), cops are also given the power to seize property which they believe helps create anti-social behavior, which may include drugs, musical instruments, stereos etc. According to the Chief Minister of the NT, Mr Denis (Mandatory Sentencing) Burke, the Sentencing Amendment Bill has been designed to reduce the amount of public gathering, drunkenness and wandering on the streets. It is another example of the Northern Territory's special ability to formulate culturally insensitive and discriminatory legislation. The outcome is more than likely to be an increase in the amount of people, particularly Aboriginal people and Youth, being held for petty disturbances, and being charged with the notorious 'trifecta' - (offensive language, assault and resist arrest) - as a result of ongoing harassment by the cops. This combined with the Mandatory Sentencing Act, will undoubtedly exacerbate the existing problem of high numbers of Aboriginal people in prison, with potentially fatal results. Other legislation allowing the Crown Prosecution (the police) the right to appeal a magistrate's decision to dismiss a criminal case further erodes the autonomy of the courts, increasing the ability of police to interfere with the fate of people, at their personal discretion.

NSW Parliament have recently passed legislation which allows police to detain anyone over 10 years old who swallows on approach of a cop, and who is thus 'reasonably suspected' of internally concealing drugs. It allows for medical imaging - scans, x-rays etc - to determine whether someone has swallowed drugs. This means being taken to a medical centre or hospital and waiting until the opportunity for attention becomes available. At a time when health funding is in crisis and hospitals overcrowded, the hypocrisy of these policy priorities is clear.

Also passed, is the Drug Premises Bill, which creates an offence for being in, on, or 'associated with' a premises suspected of being used for the dealing or making of illicit drugs. It won't be necessary for the police to prove that someone has drugs in their possession or on the premises. This is a reversal of the presumption of innocence. How will this work? In what way will houses be put under surveillance? Will the intent of visitors be considered, and if so, how will it be determined?

All of the above further entrenches the power of the legal and correctional system to foster fear, and continually threaten the personal privacy and liberty of people. The ongoing criminalisation of Aboriginality, poverty and political dissent show a criminal justice system which disadvantages the most marginalised in our society and does nothing to address the underlying inequalities and discontent. We are being attacked from the right by an irrational law and order mindset driven by politicians and the media. Somehow, they try and justify massive public spending on policing, prisons and 'national security'; while other social support services are being cut - creating the conditions which often lead to crime in the first place.

Not surprisingly, all across Australia the number of people caught in the 'net' of the criminal justice system is rising. Prison populations are skyrocketing, particularly for women, even more for Aboriginal women, who make up roughly 25-31% of the women's prison population. Increasing prison populations appear to be a result of changes in policing and sentencing trends, rather than an increase in the amount of people being found guilty of an offence by the courts. This means that jail is not being used as a last resort,

as it should be in any society. Australia is fast building more and more jails to house the increasing numbers of people being victimised by the system. In the NSW State Budget alone, Corrective Services has been allocated a massive \$240 + million for building and upgrading jails for the period 2001-2004, including at least 600 new prison beds. Many of these beds will be for women. Half will return to the system after release and very few will be rehabilitated in any way.

Prisons provide a receptacle for all the social problems we don't want to think about, and corporate and political leaders don't dare confront. By scapegoating the most marginalised of our society, prisons in collaboration with the police, laws and courts, hide the real criminals - governments and corporations that commit genocide, create poverty, and exploit workers and resources. The failure of our system is redefined in terms of individual 'criminal' behaviour.

There is growing opposition to this mentality worldwide. It can be seen in the rising number of anti-corporate protests on the streets and the increasing desire for people to regain control over their lives and to create their own communities. Direct community participation into the justice process is a central concern and stems from the recognition that the powers that be are doing nothing to address the social conditions which affect us all. Stop the Womens Jail is a coalition of campaign groups in Sydney and Western Sydney who aim to encourage reversal of the prison building trend and raise awareness of the many community based alternatives to incarceration. At the centre of our campaign, we are determined to see a reversal of the NSW Governments proposal to build two new jails - one for women in South Windsor (Western Sydney), and one for men and women in Kempsey, an area with a high proportion of Aboriginal people. We believe that jails fail in their stated aims of deterrence and rehabilitation and only serve to deliver punishment in a supposedly civilised society. The high rates of recidivism (returning to jail) prove this. Funding should be redirected into improvement and expansion of community based sentencing options like circle sentencing, mentoring, and rehabilitation.

In NSW, Community opposition to the jails has been continually voiced, at a grassroots level and in the form of an Upperhouse report which called for a moratorium on the numbers of prison beds available for women in NSW. An overwhelming majority of women in jail have histories of sexual abuse, domestic violence, psychiatric institutionalisation. Most women are inside for minor non-violent crime and drug related crimes.

There is no evidence in Australia or anywhere else in the world that increasing the amount of people locked up decreases the amount of crime. Once inside, people are subject to an isolating, often violent and mind-numbing experience which in many cases damages a life forever and leaves people embittered and seeking revenge on a society which has forever branded them an outlaw. Evidence and common sense clearly show the need for a preventative approach to crime in society.

Communication between prisoners and the outside community is an important tool in breaking down the common misperceptions and fears of what lies behind the prison walls. It helps identify the humanity of prisoners as well as providing them with a voice. If you are interested in writing to prisoners or getting involved with prison abolition and reform groups you can contact:

Justice Action and Stop the Womens Jail: noha@justiceaction.org.au, PO Box 386 Broadway NSW 2007
Abolition: PO Box 700 Brunswick Lower, VIC 3056

Anarchist Black Cross: PO Box 199 East Brunswick VIC 3057, PO Box 691 Newtown, NSW 2042

The following letter was originally sent to Justice Action. A mate from up Sydney way forwarded it to me. Its content is as applicable to Victoria as it is to the NSW campaign against Women's jail, thus I typed it out verbatim;

R.H.
c/- Emu Plain C.C.
Locked Bag 6
PENRITH NSW 2750

21 August 2001

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to you regarding my concern for the proposed Third Women's Goal built at Windsor. The Justice Action Campaign "Stop the Women's Goal" has been brought to my attention and I am fully in favor of this crusade.

I was outraged to discover the cost for this commission and how the government and other authoritative bodies believe a new jail will benefit the ever-increasing population of women in prison. This information led me to ask myself the question: - "Do we need a new corrective center for women in this state?" My answer to this is quite simply "no". It is a substantial amount of money to be talking about and it is not a decision that will solve this crisis in the long term.

Currently, in custody, I have bided my time at both institutions, being Mulawa at presently at Emu Plains. I am witnessing prison from the inside and can recognize some of the needs inmates require. Thought it is not just a question of the imprisonment of women, it is also the subject of prevention and rehabilitation for females, before and after the committed crime.

In a perfect world, there would be no crime, but we are not in a perfect world and the fact of the matter is crime will always be adamant. Prevention is the solution to this problem.

Consider the majority if inmates in custody are in for drug related offences, and assuming their addiction led to these crimes, more drug and alcohol rehabilitation programs could be a step in the right direction before the user feels the need to commit their offences, to fuel their addictions.

Another solution would be education programs and increased development of welfare policies in areas renowned for crime and drug addiction. Studies have shown there are regions with increasing drug use and subsequently a higher crime rate than others. Shouldn't these areas be targeted with a greater degree of welfare and have expanded government funding for this ongoing problem?

Realising that there are rehabilitation programs existing in prison, I firmly believe there should be more to combat the problem of re-offenders, addicts and all inmates in general. A majority of inmates are re-offenders, due to the lack of support whilst they are in custody and eventually released. The need for more drug and alcohol counselors, Psychologist and medical staff are also requirements inmates need to maintain their rehabilitation.

After reading the letter on the previous page, I felt compelled to ask the question: Why wouldn't a government want to provide greater resources to help people combat their drug and alcohol related problems? The problems of drug dependency affect everyone in society; emotionally, physically, and most importantly (the systems standards, not mine) economically. Yet I think I could argue that preventative measures would be a far cheaper solution to these issues than new prisons. So from an economic perspective it would seem nonsensical to follow such a policy.

However, from an economic perspective it makes much more sense to create an industry around incarceration, just as a great many governments around the world have. So for an initial outlay to construct a new jail, a great many jobs are spawned on many different levels. First the design of the jail, the construction. Hundreds of people could be employed in this aspect of the jail. Yet it doesn't end here.

In regional Victoria, earlier this year, several small towns; Beechworth, Langkalkal, Ron Ron and even in larger centers like Bendigo, held community protests against the closure of nearby prisons. Their perspective was that if the jail should go then a major source of revenue for their community would be lost. So the jails remained open even when they were not at all fit to remain so.

From the construction stage of the jail, next comes the maintenance and staffing of the facility, this provides more employment opportunities in regional areas. So it is clear that a pattern is emerging. To use a cliché, in regional areas it could be argued that the "prison industrial complex" is the only remaining growth industry. In these times where politicians vie for the marginal country vote so hard, these issues are at the forefront of any campaign.

Incidentally so often we hear of services being cut to country towns, banking groups relocating to central branches being a prime example, yet if one was to look at the distribution of services to a town with a jail nearby, opposed to the service levels of one that doesn't, one may often find that the town with the jail has a great deal more.

So to answer the above question, 'why wouldn't a government take steps to reduce the prison population?' in short, there is a great deal more money to be made by keeping people in jails, and adding more to them. It may seem to us that it would make more sense economically to prevent incarceration, but not to far below the surface it is abundantly clear that there is a great deal more to be gained by maintaining prisons.

Granted this is not a new idea, the Government has not even made much of an attempt to hide the fact. Yet it is amazing how the bulk of the country believes in the prisons system as if it was as natural and necessary as the rain. Like it always was and hence always will be here. People outside of the system never question it. It remains a brutal, corrupt and fundamentally unnecessary aspect of society that we dare not talk about much less try to change or remove.

-Bart.

August 25, 2001

JUSTICE ACTION

Box K 365

Haymarket, NSW 20000

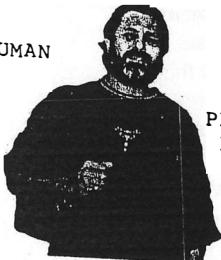
AUSTRALIA

Dear Friends:

I am a political prisoner imprisoned in a Texas prison, as a result of my human rights activism. Contrary to the claims of the U.S. government, yes, there are human rights violations in the United States, and political prisoners, and prisoners of war, do exist in U.S. prisons and jails. For a profile of my case, please visit the website link at: www.freealvaro.org. My long history of human rights activism includes my status as a delegate of a nongovernment organization (NGO) to the 49th session of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights held in Geneva, Switzerland, in March-April 1993.

I have various community support in the United States, but I am working to solicit support from the international human rights community in my case. The status of my case at this time is pending in the federal court on a petition for a new trial. International human rights groups like AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL, and other Canadian human rights groups, are currently considering filing what is called "amicus curiae" ("friend of the court") legal pleadings in my case in support of my release. Also, an international conference on United States political prisoners, pows, will be held in Havana, Cuba, in March 2002, in which representatives of the national liberation movement that I represent - the Chicano Mexican Movement for National Liberation - will attend as a delegation to address human rights violations pertaining to my political detention, and the military annexation of the Mexican homeland, occupied by the white racist colonial-settler government in the 1800's, and the many international war crimes committed by the colonial government against the Mexican people.

STOP HUMAN
RIGHTS
ABUSES
IN THE
USA!



FREE ALL
POLITICAL
PRISONERS,
POWS !

at your earliest possible time.

In Solidarity,

ALVARO LUNA HERNANDEZ

NO. 255735, Beto I Unit
P.O. Box 128

Tennessee Colony, Texas 75861-0128
usa

DEATH TO U.S. IMPERIALISM

THE SLOT AND ME!!

By Lyn Heaney Sept. 2001

I sit in my cell,
No noise
All I hear is feet scuffling,
Keys rattling.
I sit and listen.
Wondering who's door will open
Hoping its mine.
'You can go Lyn',
But
no,
not my door.
The girls come, they go....
But I'm still here,
Wishing it was my turn
But no,
not so lucky.
I feel empty and alone.
Time
That's all I have
Is Time!
I count the day's
Day's turn into weeks,
Weeks turn into months.
So again I sit on my bed
And listen,
.....listen..... for....
.....screws...
.....and...
..... keys
BANG!
SCREAMS!
I listen to hear if anyone comes.
Does anyone care!
Then I hear key's and voices
Soft voices
"Oh it's only her."
"Is she breathing?"
"Yeah, she looks ok."
I wait for her door to open
But.... **NO!!**
I S-C-R-E-A-M,
"IS SHE OK?"

No answer! Again, I lay in my cell, scared and alone. Everything is quiet. I fall asleep.

JUST WHO ARE THE TORTURERS?

by Tony Van Gastoye.

Australasian Corrections Management - ACM.

Remember that name.

And remember too

The water cannon

The tear gas

The beatings and the bashings.

The hunger strikes for basic rights.

And now they're bringing in the psyches,

To hand out electric shock treatment.

I love a sunburnt country,

A land of sweeping plains.

Justice is Just not Just.

by Ed Ucare.

One day I will be free

to hate, and revenge will be,

for those who unjustly imprisoned me,

for justice is blind and cannot see,

that I also am a human being,

Who through life is fleeing.

For the day is drawing near,

when no more I need to fear,

the injustices of mankind.

VOYEUR TV

By Matt Convey

Get used to the idea cos' it's more than some show

Once you've accepted it you can't say no

Soon they will have come to erase your privacy

Soon you will live in surveillance society

No longer behind closed doors

Living the prophecy of '1984' .

Fulham C.C. 2001

The more the merrier, my heart is at ease
It skips a beat as she stands to leave
Breathe deep, relax, there is safety in numbers
The remains, still a handful, will relieve the pressures.

To be straight in a walk, in a smile and a gaze,
How I long to be in my comfortable drug haze
To be straight through all wake and sleep and all speech,
To see every move with a microscopic reach.

Words move around me in a constant flow,
I'll add a one liner, that's as far as I'll go,
Varied monologues in my brain lay dormant,
Avoiding the spotlight I pound and pant.

To be straight in a walk, in a smile and a gaze
How I long to be in my comfortable drug haze,
To be straight through all wake and sleep and all speech,
To see every move with a microscopic reach.

Exhale, inhale, to be in death and in life,
A dwindling crowd. I think I'm in strife!
Fuck this! I'm not gonna stick around here
I'll make a quick exist. I'll show no fear.

To be straight in a walk, in a smile and a gaze,
How I long to be in my comfortable drug haze,
To be straight through all wake and sleep and all speech,
To see every move with a microscopic reach,
To be straight is not what it's made out to be,
I'd rather be blurry and fuzzy and free.

-Lydia Schlash 2001



**YOU are a VICTIM
of the DRUG WAR!**